

# FAQ - Spokane Falls Boulevard Rebuild Planning Study

June 2026



## Why is Spokane Falls Boulevard being reconstructed?

Spokane Falls Boulevard is a critical downtown corridor that serves residents, workers, visitors, and some of the City's most iconic destinations. Much of the pavement and many of the underground utilities along the corridor are approaching the end of their useful life, with some utilities dating back more than 100 years.

The need to reconstruct Spokane Falls Boulevard was first identified in the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan and the project was formally added to the City's Capital Improvement Program in 2018. This project is about maintaining essential infrastructure while rethinking how this important street can better serve people today and into the future.

## Why is a multimodal design important for Spokane Falls Boulevard?

Spokane's Comprehensive Plan, developed through extensive public input, prioritizes mobility, accessibility, safety, access to the outdoors, and a variety of transportation choices.

Today, Spokane Falls Boulevard primarily prioritizes vehicle movement and does not fully reflect these values. A multimodal design considers the needs of people walking, biking, using transit, attending events, and accessing nearby destinations, while still accommodating vehicles.

Reimagining this corridor is an opportunity to better align the street with Spokane's adopted plans and community goals.

## How will the project accommodate major events like Hoopfest?

Spokane Falls Boulevard will continue to support major community events near Riverfront Park, the Spokane Convention Center, and downtown venues.

While the primary purpose of the project is long-term infrastructure replacement and mobility improvements, the design team is actively exploring flexible design solutions that allow portions of the corridor to be adapted for special events such as Hoopfest and other community activities.

Key destinations, including the Spokane Convention Center, First Interstate Center for the Arts, Riverfront Park attractions, River Park Square, and nearby public spaces, are being considered throughout the design process to ensure access, circulation, and event operations remain functional.



## Why not design the road to eliminate delays during major events?

Streets are designed to function well under typical, day-to-day conditions rather than infrequent occasional events. Designing a roadway to eliminate delays during large events, such as festivals or tournaments, would require significantly more lanes and space. For most of the year, this would result in excess roadway capacity that is underused, encourages higher vehicle speeds, and creates a less comfortable environment for people walking, biking, and accessing downtown destinations.

Instead, the project aims to balance everyday mobility needs with safety, access, and the ability to accommodate events through traffic management strategies and flexible street design.

## Why is a two-way concept being considered on part of Spokane Falls Boulevard?

Spokane Falls Boulevard operated as a two-way street for many decades prior to Expo '74. During the mid-20th century, one-way street systems were widely adopted to move vehicles more quickly through downtowns, based on the belief that higher vehicle throughput would support economic activity.

Transportation planning practices have evolved significantly. Today, two-way streets are often used to improve local access, reduce vehicle speeds, enhance visibility for businesses, and create a more comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

For this project, the question of converting a short segment of Spokane Falls Boulevard between Washington Street and Division Street to two-way traffic was raised to explore whether access and circulation could be improved for destinations such as the Spokane Convention Center, First Interstate Center for the Arts and the Davenport Grand Hotel.

Community feedback shows mixed opinions. Some people support narrowing the roadway and rebalancing space, while others are concerned that converting a short segment to two-way traffic could be confusing. Because of this range of perspectives, the City is evaluating multiple design alternatives; some that include a two-way configuration and others that retain one-way operation.

## Is the Spokane Falls Boulevard Reconstruction Project connected to the commercial parking tax?

No. The Spokane Falls Boulevard Reconstruction Project is not driven by, nor dependent on, the commercial parking tax.

The project is partially funded through a Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), a federal funding source that can only be used for specific, legally defined transportation purposes. Because of these restrictions, the project is independent of the parking tax.

The [commercial parking tax, approved in 2025](#), is intended to support system-wide transportation improvements and encourage redevelopment of surface parking lots. It does not determine whether individual projects like Spokane Falls Boulevard move forward.



## Hasn't the public already weighed in on this? Why revisit it?

Yes, public and stakeholder feedback has already played an important role in shaping the project.

Earlier outreach shared preliminary concepts. Since then, the project team has refined those concepts based on additional engineering analysis, design development, and coordination with City leadership and advisory bodies.

The City believes these updated concepts deserve renewed consideration. Keeping multiple options on the table allows the City to balance community feedback with technical analysis, operational needs, and long-term goals for downtown Spokane.

## How are decisions ultimately made for this project?

Community input is a critical part of the process, but it is not the only factor. Decisions are informed by:

- Goals and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan
- Public and stakeholder feedback
- Technical and traffic analysis
- Input from advisory bodies
- Direction from City leadership, City Council, and the Mayor's Office

By evaluating multiple alternatives and sharing updated designs publicly, the City aims to keep the process transparent and inclusive while ensuring decisions are grounded in data and long-term planning objectives.

## What is the purpose of investing in bicycle facilities?

Current bicycle use does not necessarily reflect a lack of demand; it often reflects a lack of comfort and safety. A protected facility would provide a safer way to access Riverfront Park, downtown venues and destinations, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Spokane Falls Boulevard is currently a challenging environment for people biking due to traffic speeds, limited protection, and one-way directional traffic. Research and experience from other cities show that improving comfort, safety, and connectivity leads to increased use of bicycle facilities.

